

**SUNIL SHARMA'S VISION IN CONTEXT – THE MINOTAUR IN MODERN INDIAN LITERATURE AND GLOBAL DISCOURSE****Monika Khurana**

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the symbolic resonance of the Minotaur in modern Indian literature, situating it as a powerful metaphor for navigating postcolonial identity, hybridist, and resistance. Drawing from postcolonial theory and literary analysis, it examines how the Minotaur—originally a figure of Greek mythology—has been reinterpreted in Indian literary works to critique colonial legacies, interrogate cultural hybridist, and confront the complexities of identity. By analyzing the Minotaur's dual role as both oppressor and symbol of resistance, the paper highlights how Sharma's Vision (representing the Indian literary imagination) contributes to global postcolonial discourse, offering a unique lens to negotiate the labyrinth of tradition, modernity, and otherness.

Keywords: Global Discourse, Symbolic, Environmental, Social Justice, Modern, Indian Novels

1. INTRODUCTION

The Minotaur, a half-human, half-bull creature from Greek mythology, has long symbolized the monstrous, the enigmatic, and the inescapable. Confined in Daedalus's labyrinth by King Minos, the Minotaur embodies the clash of civilizations—the Minoan bull, a symbol of power, and the human, a product of intellect. This duality has been remained across literary traditions, particularly in postcolonial narratives. In modern Indian literature, the Minotaur emerges as a potent metaphor for the hybrid identities, cultural labyrinths, and unresolved tensions of postcolonial society. This paper argues that the Minotaur, through Sharma's Vision—a metaphor for Indian literary creativity—reflects both the anxieties and possibilities of postcolonial identity formation, offering a subversive counter-narrative to Western discourse.

2. THE MINOTAUR IN CLASSICAL AND COLONIAL CONTEXTS

The Minotaur's myth origins in ancient Greece position it as a colonial symbol, rooted in the Minoan-Mycenaean power dynamics. The Greek narrative of these us slaying the Minotaur mirrors colonial conquest, where the 'civilized' hero subdues the 'barbaric' other. During the British Raj, colonial discourse often framed India as a 'labyrinthine' subcontinent, its people as monstrous hybrids of tradition and modernity. Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) critiques such binaries, highlighting how the West constructed the colonized as irrational and primal, akin to



the Minotaur. Indian writers, however, have reworked this symbolism to reclaim agency, transforming the Minotaur from a monstrosity into a symbol of resistance and identity.

3. POSTCOLONIAL THEORIES AND THE MINOTAUR

Homi Bhabha's theories of hybridity and the "third space" provide a framework for reinterpreting the Minotaur. Bhabha argues that cultural hybridity—a blending of colonizer and colonized—produces new, destabilizing identities. The Minotaur's dual nature mirrors this hybridity, challenging fixed notions of purity. Similarly, the Minotaur's labyrinth can be read as a metaphor for the in-betweenness of postcolonial identity, where linear narratives collapse into nonlinear, contested spaces. This aligns with Ashis Nandy's concept of the "postcolonial psyche," where Indian literature grapples with the trauma of colonialism and the struggle to redefine selfhood.

4. THE MINOTAUR IN INDIAN LITERATURE: CASE STUDIES

While Indian literature does not explicitly name the Minotaur, its themes and symbols echo its metaphor. Consider the following adaptations:

4.1 Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*

Rushdie's protagonist, Saleem Sinai, mirrors the Minotaur as a hybrid entity: born during India's birth as an independent nation, he is burdened with a "mendicant's nose" (a physical deformity symbolizing monstrosity). The novel's labyrinthine narrative, interweaving history and myth, reflects the postcolonial labyrinth, where Saleem confronts the "ghost of the Raj" (the colonial Minotaur) to reclaim Indian narratives.

4.2 Arundhati Roy's *The God of Small Things*

Roy's novel constructs a metaphorical Minotaur in the form of the "Love Laws" that govern caste, gender, and class. The labyrinth of these social hierarchies traps characters like Estha and Rahel, who navigate a world where tradition devours modernity. The Minotaur here is not a creature but a systemic force, demanding sacrifice—echoing the historical practice of the Minotaur consuming victims.

4.3 Vikram Seth's *A Suitable Boy*

The novel's sprawling narrative mirrors a labyrinth, with characters entangled in social and political webs. The "suitability" of love marriages becomes a Minotaur-like test: to choose the



wrong partner is to be devoured by societal chaos. Here, the Minotaur symbolizes the tension between individual desire and cultural obligation.

These examples illustrate how Indian authors, through Sharma's Vision, repurpose the Minotaur to interrogate postcolonial anxieties and societal labyrinths.

5. GLOBAL DISCOURSE AND THE MINOTAUR

The Minotaur's reinterpretation in Indian literature resonates with global postcolonial texts. For instance, Derek Walcott's *Omeros* (1990) reimagines the Trojan War in the Caribbean, using myth to challenge Eurocentric histories. Similarly, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's *Matigari* confronts colonial legacies, positioning the marginalized as both victims and resisters. In this context, Sharma's Vision contributes to a transnational discourse where the Minotaur transcends its Greek origins to become a universal symbol of hybridity and resistance.

The Minotaur's dual identity also parallels the postcolonial "double consciousness" articulated by W.E.B. Du Bois. Indian writers, like Du Bois's African Americans, grapple with being seen as perpetual Others. By reimagining the Minotaur, they assert their right to author their own narratives, challenging the imperial gaze that once constructed them as monstrous.

6. CONCLUSION

Sharma's Vision, as embodied in modern Indian literature, reconfigures the Minotaur from a symbol of subjugation to one of empowerment. Through the metaphors of hybridist, labyrinthine identity, and resistance, Indian authors navigate the complexities of postcolonial existence. Their works contribute to global discourse by expanding the Minotaur's symbolic range, offering a cross-cultural lens to confront the monstrosities of history and the labyrinths of identity. In doing so, they assert that the Minotaur—once a tool of colonial narrative—can be slain or subsumed, not as a monster, but as a mirror reflecting the contradictions of human civilization.

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